Today's News - Monday, August 2, 2010

- ArcSpace brings us eyefuls of Snøhetta's National 9/11 Memorial Museum Pavilion at the WTC site.
- Davidson delves deep into the complexities and politics of renovating the "decaying time machine" that is the U.N. HQ ("even the research for this article ran afoul of U.N. procedures").
- Plans for Iran's new London embassy include a "contemporary structure with emphasis on culture" - but some locals and preservationists think otherwise ("catastrophic" and "hideous" - oh my!).
- What to do about it? Call on Prince Charles to save the day! (having Jenkins and the Victorian Society cry foul might help, too)
- Meanwhile, one man has a vision of restoring Iraq's Garden of Eden - a marshland paradise destroyed by Hussein.
- Architects in India band together for the Delhi Nullahs revitalization project, "a blueprint for how Indian cities can put their canals and drains to use rather than cementing them over."
- Walker on revitalizing L.A.'s "little cement chute" (a.k.a. Los Angeles River): "there's great hope for everything from sustainably managing seasonal floods in urban areas to "daylighting" buried creeks" everywhere + Call for entries: Los Angeles Cleantech Corridor & Green District Open Ideas Competition is a chance to come up with your own solutions (registration deadline looms!).
- Szenasy's Q&A with the organizers of the CoolClimate Art Contest who believe that artists and designers can help mobilize us to push for policy initiatives to combat climate change.
- Could a mile-long market under Harlem tracks be "a potential High Line North"?
- A barn-raising of sorts for New York State's first Passive House (not without complications, of course).
- Muchnic on the The Israel Museum expansion: "the primary challenges were to moderate Jerusalem's intense, crisp light and restore the original sense of intimacy between the buildings and the landscape."
- Bernstein on the light and glass master Carpenter turned architect (and you thought he only did art?).
- Saffron on the uncertain future of Philly's old Family Court building: some see an "exciting, glamorous hotel," but developers aren't so sure - "big old buildings are hard to reuse."
- Architecture for Humanity x 2: Sinclair on Cambodia and working in Asia: Cambodia has "yet to be spoilt by poorly built 'Westernized' block construction." + Rawsthorn tracks down AfH's "nomadic" humanitarian architect Corum.
- U.K.'s Benoy hits it big in Bangalore and Mumbai.
- An eyeful of the 52nd AIA Honolulu Design Awards winners.

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Snøhetta: National September 11 Memorial Museum Pavilion, World Trade Center Site, New York, NY

Fixing the World: How do you renovate the United Nations? Diplomatically. The original trinity of U.N. buildings...is a decaying time machine...If a whiff of careful fakery clings to the renovation, it, too, belongs in the U.N.'s tradition of improvisational theater. By Justin Davidson -- Wallace K. Harrison; Le Corbusier; Oscar Niemeyer- New York Magazine

Iran seeks more urbane image with sleek new London embassy: Tehran looks to escape association with SAS and 1980 siege by building contemporary structure with emphasis on culture...will cost at least £100m and is sited in a sensitive area of historic buildings, will embody "Iran's public image in London"...Local residents have decried the scheme as "like a spaceship"..."catastrophic" and "hideous." By Robert Booth -- Daneshgar Architects [image]- Guardian (UK)

Prince Charles called on to block modern Iranian embassy next to historic church...in one of Britain's most expensive neighbourhoods: ...modern design has appalled wealthy residents and heritage experts alike...Simon Jenkins said: "I know the site well. It is totally inappropriate to locate such a strident modern building in such a sensitive conservation area" -- Daneshgar Architects; Victorian Society- Telegraph (UK)

Iraq's Garden of Eden: Restoring the Paradise that Saddam Hussein Destroyed: [He] drained the unique wetlands of southern Iraq as a punishment to the region's Marsh Arabs...Two decades later, one courageous US Iraqi is leading efforts to restore the marshes. Not even exploding bombs can deter him from his dream. -- Azzam Alwash/Nature Iraq [slide show]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Nullah and void: Ever thought of Delhi as a criss-crossed mesh of waterways, with boats plying and walkways, cycling paths and parks on either side? That is the dream that 70 architects have presented...Delhi Nullahs revitalisation project (www.delhinullahs.org)...a blueprint for how Indian cities can put their canals and drains to use rather than cementing them over. -- Manit Rastogi/Morphogenesis- Business Standard (India)

As Los Angeles's River Runs Again, Designers Determine Its Course: ...the Los Angeles River is having a big month...If [the EPA] can revitalize our little cement chute, there's great hope for everything from sustainably managing seasonal floods in urban areas to "daylighting" buried creeks... By Alissa Walker -- Piggy Backyard; PBy Collaborative Design Group; Michael Maltzan; Perkins+Will; Chee Salette Architecture; Mia Lehrer; railLA [images, links]- GOOD Magazine

Call for entries: Los Angeles Cleantech Corridor & Green District Open Ideas Competition; registration deadline: August 15- The Architect's Newspaper / SCI-Arc

Q&A: Art vs. Climate Change with the organizers of the CoolClimate Art Contest: ..believe that artists and designers, with their well-known abilities to reach into our emotions, can help mobilize us to push for policy initiatives in energy, alternative fuels, and green jobs... By Susan S. Szenasy -- David Ross; Josh Wattles/DeviantART; Karl Burkhart; Sarah Ingersoll- Metropolis Magazine

Mile-long under-line market backed for Harlem: Report supports creation of a strip of small open-air shops beneath the elevated Metro North tracks in notoriously "under-retailed" area; seen as a potential High Line North. -- Center for an Urban Future (CUF) [link to report]- Crain's New York

Sun Shines on NY's First Passive House: Barn-raising for Dennis Wedlick Architect's super-sustainable Hudson Passive Project: ...fulfilling the international performance standards to achieve certification by the Passivhaus Institute...is a bit of a puzzle...- The Architect's Newspaper

The Israel Museum: One for the ages: The Jerusalem institution celebrates its 45th birthday with a major expansion and facelift that allows the richness of the collection...to shine...the primary challenges were to moderate Jerusalem's intense,

crisp light and restore the original sense of intimacy between the buildings and the landscape. By Suzanne Muchnic -- Alfred Mansfeld/Dora Gad (1965); James Carpenter Design Associates; Efrat-Kowalsky Architects; Anish Kapoor; Olafur Eliasson- Los Angeles Times

Transparency Is Only the Beginning: James Carpenter applies his experience with manipulating light to buildings around the world. By Fred A. Bernstein [images]- New York Times

What happens to Philadelphia's old Family Court building? Gov. Rendell envisions the building on Logan Square as an "exciting, glamorous hotel." Developers aren't so sure...Big old buildings are hard to reuse, as Philadelphia well knows. It already has plenty of exciting, glamorous buildings on its hands. By Inga Saffron -- John T. Windrim (1941)- Philadelphia Inquirer

Cameron Sinclair Dishes on Cambodia, Working in Asia: Cambodia has "yet to be spoilt by poorly built 'Westernized' block construction." -- Architecture for Humanity- Fast Company

A Font of Ideas From a 'Nomadic' Humanitarian Architect: A planner for Architecture for Humanity helped brainstorm projects ranging from ships made of plastic to housing for Native Americans and Haitians. By Alice Rawsthorn -- Nathaniel Corum [images]- New York Times

UK architects win major contracts in India: Benoy...signed three major contracts in Bangalore and Mumbai...- The Economic Times (India)

52nd AIA Honolulu Design Awards winners -- Dean Sakamoto Architects; Urban Works; Flansburgh Architects; WCIT Architecture; Group 70 International; Yamasato, Fujiwara, Higa & Associates; PQ Architects; Architects Hawaii; Benjamin Woo Architects; Long & Associates; Mason Architects; Peter Vincent Architects; Robin Lee AIA; Zak Architecture [links to images, info]- AIA Honolulu

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